

**Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
National Bison Range and Affiliated Refuges Annual Funding Agreement  
Preliminary Discussions and Draft Plan of Action  
February 20, 2003**

The Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) met on February 20, 2003, to re-initiate discussions about the potential for the CSKT to enter into an agreement with the FWS to manage the National Bison Range and affiliated refuges<sup>1</sup> within the reservation (NBR). The following Draft Principles and Plan of Action were agreed upon.<sup>2</sup>

**PRINCIPLES**

- The Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEA) provides for the Interior Secretary's discretionary authority to enter into Annual Funding Agreements with tribes for the management of other federal units (those not for Indians because of their status as Indians) when those units have a historical, cultural and geographic links to the tribes. The CSKT and the NBR clearly have those linkages.
- The National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act (NWRSA) requires that the Secretary, through the Director of the FWS, manage all refuges. Accordingly, the NBR will require an FWS manager and FWS oversight of certain inherently federal functions of the refuges.
- The FWS will retain all ownership of NBR refuge lands and easements.
- The NBR refuges will continue to be managed for the wildlife purposes for which they were established and for public access and activities on the refuges so long as those are consistent with the conservation of the wildlife for which the refuges were established.

**PLAN OF ACTION**

- I. **Public Input Goal** – Develop a media plan and process to seek Congressional, Gubernatorial, and public input at key decision points in the negotiation processes  
**Responsible Parties:** Fred Matt (CSKT)  
Paul Hoffman (FWS)  
**Timeline:** March 1, 2003
- II. **Compatibility Issues Goal** – Cooperatively develop an action plan, responsible parties and timelines to address all compatibility issues prior to executing an Annual Funding Agreement  
**Responsible Parties:** Dave Wiseman (FWS)  
Joe Dupuis & Fred Matt (CSKT)  
**Timeline:** April 1, 2003

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<sup>1</sup> The FWS manages a refuge complex in the Mission Valley that includes the National Bison Range, Nine Pipes and Pablo National Wildlife Refuges within the reservation and the Wetlands Districts portions of which are within the reservation boundary.

<sup>2</sup> These Principles and the Plan of Action are draft and subject to approval by the CSKT Council and FWS. They will also be made available to the Congressional and Gubernatorial Offices and the public for comment.

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- III. **Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Bison Range Goal** – Negotiate a contract with the CSKT to develop the Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for the National Bison Range and at a later time the CCPs for the Pablo and Nine Pipes National Wildlife Refuges and the Wetlands Districts  
**Responsible Parties:** Mike Spratt & Steve Berendzen (FWS)  
Anna Sorrell & Clayton Matt (CSKT)  
**Timeline:** January 31, 2004
- IV. **Management Agreement Goal** – Negotiate the terms and conditions of a long term Management Agreement that addresses responsibilities, authorities and employment issues  
**Responsible Parties:** Steve Berendzen (FWS)  
Anna Sorrell (CSKT)  
**Timelines:** Draft by June 30, 2003<sup>3</sup>  
Final by November 30, 2003
- V. **Annual Funding Agreement Goal**<sup>4</sup> – Negotiate the terms, conditions and budget for an Annual Funding Agreement consistent with the Management Agreement  
**Responsible Parties:** Steve Berendzen (FWS)  
Anna Sorrell (CSKT)  
**Timelines:** Draft by June 30, 2003  
Final by November 30, 2003

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<sup>3</sup> The timelines for Goals IV & V may be extended by mutual agreement of the CSKT and the FWS

<sup>4</sup> Goals IV & V may be combined. It will be necessary to further research the legal authority under which the CSKT and FWS can enter into anything other than an Annual Funding Agreement as provided for under the ISDEA.